



## Historic Property Inventory Report

### Location

Field Site No. 112 DAHP No.

Historic Name: Alaska Building/ Alaska Club

Common Name: Alaska Building

Property Address: 618 Second Ave, Seattle, WA 98104

Comments:

Tax No./Parcel No. 0939000080

Plat/Block/Lot Boren and Dennys Add/ Block 3/ Lots 1 and 4

Acreage 0.3

Supplemental Map(s)

Township/Range/EW	Section	1/4 Sec	1/4 1/4 Sec	County	Quadrangle
T24R04E	06	NE	SE	King	SEATTLE SOUTH

### Coordinate Reference

Easting: 1188302

Northing: 832962

Projection: Washington State Plane South

Datum: HARN (feet)



## Historic Property Inventory Report

### Identification

Survey Name: Pioneer Square-Skid Road National Historic District Date Recorded: 07/15/2004

Field Recorder: Karin Link

Owner's Name: Alaska Building

Owner Address:

City: State: Zip:

Classification: Building

Resource Status: Comments:

National Register

Local Register

Within a District? Yes

Contributing? Yes

National Register:

Local District: Pioneer Square Preservation District

National Register District/Thematic Nomination Name: Pioneer Square--Skid Road Historic District (Including Boundary Increases)

Eligibility Status: Not Determined - SHPO

Determination Date: 1/1/0001

Determination Comments:

### Description

Historic Use: Social - Clubhouse Current Use: Commerce/Trade - Professional

Plan: Rectangle Stories: 14 Structural System: Steel

Changes to Plan: Intact Changes to Interior: Slight

Changes to Original Cladding: Intact Changes to Windows: Intact

Changes to Other: Moderate

Other (specify): storefront

Style: Cladding: Roof Type: Roof Material:

Beaux Arts - American Veneer - Terra Cotta Flat with Parapet Unknown

Renaissance Concrete Asphalt / Composition - Built Up

Brick

Foundation: Form/Type:

Concrete - Poured Commercial - Three-Part Vertical Block

### Narrative



## Historic Property Inventory Report

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### Study Unit

### Other

Social Movements/Organizations

Science and Engineering

Commerce

Architecture/Landscape Architecture

Date of Construction: 1904 Built Date

Builder: James Black Masonry Construction Company

Engineer:

Architect: Eames and Young; Saunders and Lawton

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places: Yes

Property is located in a potential historic district (National and/or local): Yes - National

Property potentially contributes to a historic district (National and/or local): Yes

### Statement of Significance:

The Alaska Building was completed in 1904, after eleven months of construction. It was designed by Eames and Young, a St. Louis architecture firm with Saunders and Lawton, as supervising architects. The contractor was James Black Masonry Construction Company. In its day, it was the first steel frame building of any height in the Northwest and Seattle's first skyscraper. It remained Seattle's tallest building for ten years after it was built. It was designed using terra cotta and in a style inspired by the Beaux Arts, which is somewhat rare for Seattle (although the Frye Hotel is another major Beaux Arts example in the Pioneer Square-Skid Road National Historic District). The building dates from a period of economic and industrial growth, 1900-1910, in the heart of Seattle and in the city as a whole.

The history behind the building's construction is of note. In 1903, J. E. Chilberg, Jafet Lindeberg and other stockholders of the Scandinavian-American Bank, purchased the southeast corner of the Second and Cherry from the Amos Brown Estate for \$ 250,000. They intended to erect a building for the Scandinavian-American Bank. Shortly after the purchase of the land, however, J. C. Marmaduke of St. Louis made a proposition to J. E. Chilberg and they decided to jointly erect the fourteen story steel frame Alaska Building. The top penthouse level housed the Alaskan Club, founded to promote business ventures between Alaska and the Pacific Northwest and as a social club. About four years later, a similar club, the Arctic Club, formed as a result of the merger of the Arctic Brotherhood and of the Alaska Club, would erect a building for itself at Third Avenue and Jefferson Street, now the Morrison Hotel.

## Historic Property Inventory Report

Description of  
Physical  
Appearance:

The Alaska Building is a fourteen story building located on the southeast corner of Second Avenue and Cherry Street. Its footprint occupies an entire quarter block, a rectangle approximately 74 feet by 50 feet. Above the ground level base and the basement of the building, the remaining stories form an L-shaped plan with an interior court to the southwest. The building has a steel frame structure with reinforced concrete, covered with various veneers. The two-story base is mainly clad in light matte terra cotta veneer, followed by eleven stories clad in buff brick veneer and the top story in matte terra cotta. A projecting belt-course separates the base of the building from the upper floors and a second belt-course separates the top level from the brick clad stories just below. The eleven stories consist of vertical bays, usually with two separate window openings per floor on the inner bays, and a large single trabeated opening at the end bays on Second Avenue and on Cherry Street. The inner bays are framed by tall piers, with smooth capitals and a simple appended ornament at the center of the flat capital. The "top" of the building at the fourteenth level has trabeated openings surmounted by circular openings and a projecting cornice with a dentil band and an egg-and-dart band below it. Aside from the height of the building, its most striking features are the ornate Beaux Arts ornamental bas-reliefs at the base of the building and at the top level.

The ornamentation of the bottom two floors of the building facing the street consists of repeated terra cotta panels showing: interlocking geometrical shapes, angel heads with wings, serpents entwined around a torch with horns of plenty placed symmetrically to each side of the torch. These are topped by scroll-like shapes set to each side of a rounded shape with a lion's head above it. Spandrels above storefronts tend to be ornamented in a simpler fashion with terra cotta panels covering the lintel above each storefront. Often a medallion with a leafy frame is set at the center of these panels. The frame of the main doorway on Second Avenue is also ornate and includes a projecting entablature with large ornate brackets to each side. The style of the building is typical of the Beaux Arts and is also frequently described as Second Renaissance Revival.

The building is also notable for its lobby, which has marble veneer on walls as well as on the ceiling.

Major  
Bibliographic  
References:

"The Alaska Building, Historic Preservation Certification Application, Part 1," n.d. Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, State of Washington, Olympia, Washington, Microfiche File.  
King County Tax Assessor's Records, ca.1936-1972.

Bagley, Clarence. History of Seattle from the Earliest Settlement to the Present Time. 3 vols. Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1916.

Sayre, J. Willis. This City of Ours. Seattle: Seattle School District No. 1, 1936.

## Photos



Above basement level on north elevation  
typical ornament



portal at main façade



In front of the Alaska Building are the Corona Building and the  
Hartford Building (lower of the two).  
main facade and south elevation



## Historic Property Inventory Report

### Identification

Survey Name: Assessors Data Project: King County E Date Recorded: 07/03/2011  
Field Recorder: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.  
Owner's Name:  
Owner Address:  
City: State: Zip:  
Classification: Building  
Resource Status: Comments:  
Survey/Inventory  
Within a District? No  
Contributing?  
National Register:  
Local District: No  
National Register District/Thematic Nomination Name:  
Eligibility Status: Not Determined - SHPO  
Determination Date: 7/25/2011  
Determination Comments:

### Description

Historic Use: Unknown Current Use: Domestic - Hotel  
Plan: Unknown Stories: 15 Structural System: Unknown  
Changes to Plan: Changes to Interior:  
Changes to Original Cladding: Changes to Windows:  
Changes to Other:  
Other (specify):  
Style: Cladding: Roof Type: Roof Material:  
Unknown Unknown Unknown Unknown  
Foundation: Form/Type:  
Unknown Hotel/Motel

### Narrative

Study Unit	Other
Architecture/Landscape Architecture	
Date of Construction: 1904 Built Date	Builder: Engineer: Architect:



## Historic Property Inventory Report

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places: Unable to Determine

Property is located in a potential historic district (National and/or local): Unable to Determine

Property potentially contributes to a historic district (National and/or local): Unable to Determine

**Statement of Significance:** Data included on this historic property inventory form (HPI) detail stemmed from County Assessor building records imported by the Washington State Department of Archaeology of Historic Preservation (DAHP) into WISAARD in 2011. This upload reduces data entry burden on community volunteers and historical societies participating in the survey and inventory of their communities. The intent of this project is directed specifically to facilitating community and public involvement in stewardship, increasing data accuracy, and providing a versatile planning tool to Certified Local Governments (CLGs). Project methodology entailed use of the University of Washington's State Parcel Database (<http://depts.washington.edu/wagis/projects/parcels/development.php>) to provide the base parcel layer for CLGs. Filtering of building data collected from each county trimmed out all properties built after 1969, as well as all current, previously inventoried properties. Translation of building data descriptors to match fields in HPI allowed the data upload. Calculation of point locations utilized the center of each parcel. Data on this detail provides a snapshot of building information as of 2011. A detailed project methodology description resides with DAHP. Project team members: Historic Preservation Northwest, GeoEngineers, and Artifacts Consulting, Inc. (project lead).

**Description of Physical Appearance:** The building at 618 2nd Avenue, Seattle, is located in King County. According to the county assessor, the structure was built in 1904 and is a hotel. Also according to the county assessor, the structure was remodeled in 1994. The 15-story building has a hotel/motel form.

**Major Bibliographic References:**



## Historic Property Inventory Report

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### Photos

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